

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 to 10, 12, 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) in view of Kent.

Applicant thanks Examiner for the explanation regarding the Examiner's view of Kent and how Kent anticipates the present claims. With respect, Applicant disagrees. Claim 1 in its present form defines a method of *"modifying an image to be digitally printed ... to compensate for failure to correctly print dots of ink at specific locations"*.

Claim 1 defines the method steps of identifying the specific locations where there has been a failure to print the required image data. Applicant concedes that Kent discloses such a feature by determining where a laser has produced an oversize or undersize spot. Claim 1 further defines the step of adjusting the dot size of at least one dot at a location adjacent or near to the respective specific location from that required by the image data. This feature when read on the preamble of the claim defines how the image is modified to compensate for a print failure at the specific location. Applicant argues that this feature is not taught by Kent.

Kent describes a system in a laser printer where the spot size produced by each laser in an array of lasers is determined and compared with the required spot size of the array. Where a laser produces an undersize spot, the drive voltage of that same laser is increased to increase the spot size. Where a laser produces an oversize spot, the drive voltage of that same laser is decreased to decrease the spot size. That is, the aim of Kent is to adjust the output of all the lasers so that they each produce the same spot size. Kent does not teach or suggest adjusting the spot size of a laser adjacent or nearby a specific location in order to compensate for the failure to correctly print dots at the specific location, which is an explicit requirement of present claim 1. In certain circumstances, a laser adjacent a defective laser may have its spot size adjusted, however this will only occur where the spot size of the adjacent laser is also defective, and NOT as a means of compensating for the first defective laser.

In light of these distinctions, Applicant is firmly of the opinion that claim 1 is novel and inventive over Kent. However, in the event that Examiner disagrees with Applicant's submissions, Applicant has presented a new method claim 16 which more explicitly defines that the adjustment of the spot size at the adjacent location is in order to compensate for the defective printing at the defective location.

Claims 2 to 6 are dependent on claim 1, and thus Applicant submits that these claims are novel in view of Kent for the reasons presented above.

Claim 7 is an independent apparatus claim corresponding to the method of claim 1. Claim 7 has all the features of claim 1 defined from the perspective of an apparatus. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 7 is novel over Kent for the reasons presented above in respect of claim 1. Applicant further submits that claims 8 to 15, being dependent on claim 7 are also novel. However, in the event that Examiner disagrees, Applicant has proposed new claim 18 being an apparatus claim with features corresponding to the method presented in new claim 16.

Summary

Applicant has presented herein detailed reasons in rebuttal of the rejection of the claims. Applicant has further presented new claims for consideration.

Applicant submits that this response is fully responsive to the Official Action mailed 14 May 2004 and that this response meets the requirements of a submission in respect of a Request for Continued Examination. Further consideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Very respectfully,

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